

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 081308Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4808

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 3902

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SY, EG, IS, US, PLO

SUBJECT: SYRIAN REACTION TO SINAI AGREEMTN - OCTOBER 8

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT ASAD HELD TALKS REPORTEDLY LASTING FIVE HOURS WITH PLO LEADERS ARAFAT AND QADDUMI EVENING OCT. 7. END SUMMARY.

2. DOMESTIC

SANA REPORTED OCT. 8 THAT PRES. ASADRECEIVED PLO LEADERS ARAFAT AND QADDUMI PREVIOUS EVENING FOR TALKS WHICH CENTERED ON "GENERAL SITUATION IN AREA AND CIRCUMSTANCES CREATED BY SINAI AGREEMENT." ACCORDING TO BBC, MEETING LASTED FIVE OURS. ARAFAT ALSO CABLED ASAD EXPRESSING IN NAME OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE APPRECIATION AND FULL SUPPORT FOR SYRIA'S POSITION LINKING PALESTINIAN AND SYRIAN ISSUES. "YOUR SPEECH CONFIRMS THE SOLIDARITY OF OUR STRUGGLE AND DESTINY AND STRENGTHENS THE MARCH OF OUR NATION ON THE ROAD TO VICTORY."

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POPULAR RALLIES AND MARCHES HELD OCT. 7 IN DAMASCUS, HOMS,

DERAA AND TARTUS. MASSES "DEPLORED SINAI AGREEMENT AND DEMANDED THAT PEOPLE AND ARMY OF EGYPT BLOCK IT."

3. FOREIGN

OCT. 8 MEDIA HAILED FAVORABLE WORLDWIDE REACTION TO ASAD'S SPEECH LINKING SYRIAN AND PALESTINIAN FRONTS.

PRESS REPORTED ARAFAT INTERVIEW ON EAST GERMAN TELEVISION IN WHICH ARAFAT CLAIMED THAT LEBANESE CRISIS CONNECTED WITH SINAI AGREEMENT. PALESTINIAN PRESS REPORTEDLY URGING ARAB MEETING TO DETAIL PROGRAM FOR RESISTANCE TO AGREEMENT AND TO ATTRACT EGYPTIAN PEOPLE AND ARMY BACK INTO RANKS OF ARAB SOLIDARITY.

FORMER UNTSO COMMANDER BURNS STATED IN OTTAWA THAT PRESENCE OF U.S. TECHNICIANS IN SINAI WILL LEAD TO DEEPER AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN REGION. IRESS ALSO REPORTED COMMENTS BY SEN. ADOUREZK AND FORMER UNDERSECRETARY BALL CRITICAL OF AGREEMENT.

PRESS NOTED STATEMENT BY SECRETARY BEFORE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING PLO IN WHICH HE "RENEWED REFUSAL OF U.S. GOVERNMENT TO NEGOTIATE WITH PLO. KISSINGER SAID WASHINGTON WILL REFUSE TO NEGOTIATE WITH PLO AS LONG AS IT REFUSES TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL."

4. COMMENTARY

OCT. 7 AL-BAATH CARRIED ARTICLE BY DEFMIN TLAS DEPLORING "EGYPTIAN SURRENDER TO U.S." HE RESTATED ARAB HOPE THA U.S. WOULD AT LEAST EXERCISE NEUTRALITY TOWARD PALESTINE QUESTION, "WHICH IS CORE OF ARAB-ZIONIST CONFLICT. BUT WE DO NOT SEE IN STATEMENTS OF WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN ANY SPARK OF HOPE IN AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD PALESTINIAN RIGHTS." DESPITE MASSIVE AMERICAN AID O ISRAEL, "WE DO NOT BLAME AMERICA AS MUCH AS WE BLAME ONE WHO DEVIATED FROM ARAB AOLIDARITY AND STOOD ALONE WITH AMERICAN AND ISRAEL, ONE WHO SOLD BLOOD OF OCT. MARTYRS AND PALESTINIAN RIGHTS." HE CONCLUDED SECRETARY CORRECT WHEN HE WARNED CONGRESS THAT RELEASE OF SECRET DOCUMENTS WOULD CREAE NEW DIFFICULTIES FOR SADAT.

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REGIONAL COMMAND MEMBER MAHMUD HADID WROTE IN OCT. 8 AL-BAATH THAT "IF EGYPTIAN RULERS HEADED BY SADAT INTEND TO ASSASSINATE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OCT. WAR, THEY ARE MISTAKEN. OUR ARAB PEOPLE, ESPECIA7LY ARAB PEOPLE OF EGYPT, CAPABLE OF TOPPLING SINAI AGREEMENT."

OTHER COLUMNISTS IN AL-BAATH AND AL-THAWRAH OPINED THAT "ASAD'S SPEECH BROUGHT MASSES BACK TO SUBSTANCE OF CAUSE," "EGYPTIAN

COMMAND WENT TOO FAR DESPITE WARNINGS FROM
SYRIA," SADAT IS CON-
DUCTING COUNTER-REVOLUTION AGAINST NASSER'S PROGRAM, SINAI AGREEMENT
PERMITTED SOME RELAXATION OF ISRAELI ECON
MIC WOES, AND SYRIAN-PLO
REJECTION OF AGREEMENT EMBODIES GOALS OF ARAB MASSES.

MAJ. HAYTHAM AL-AYYUBI, CHIEF EDITOR OF ARAB MILITARY ENCYCLO-
PEDIA, SUPPORTED TLAS' CALL FOR CREATION OF EASERN FRONT CONSISTING
OF SYRIA, LEBANON, JORDAN, IRAQ AND PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE. HE
DENIED THAT AIM WAS TO EXCLUDE EGYPT, CLAIMING INSTEAD HE TRYING TO
CREATE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WOULD ATTRACT EGYPT BACK INTO FOLD.
MURPHY

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